

CULTIVATING CIVIC ECOTONES FOR FOOD JUSTICE

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Beans Green and Yellow

By Mary Oliver

In fall
it is mushrooms
gathered in dampness
under the pines;
in spring
I have known the taste of the lamb
full of milk
and spring grass;
today
it is beans green and yellow
and lettuce and basil
from my friend's garden -
how calmly,
as though it were an ordinary thing,
we eat the blessed earth.



Civic Ecotone

- “intermediary place where participants *dismantle the boundaries* between community and campus to create a highly *interactive* environment for civic *engagement* and a renewed sense of *collective responsibility*” (Gilbert 2013).

Food Justice, as defined by the advocacy organization Just Food, is characterized by “communities exercising their right to grow, sell and eat healthy food” (Johnson 2014).



Food justice is part of a human rights framework for the amelioration of food insecurity that requires us to “respect, protect, and fulfill the right to food” (Cilton and Rose 2009).

What is food justice?

Five key strategies for campus food justice initiatives



Respect for the production of food



Commitment to education



Protection of natural resources



Guarantee of shared access



Cultivation of civic competencies

Civic Ecotones at Otterbein

1. Cultivation of a community garden (a repurposed brownfield)
2. Student management of a campus resource center and food pantry
3. Development of service-learning opportunities for food justice



COMMUNITY GARDEN

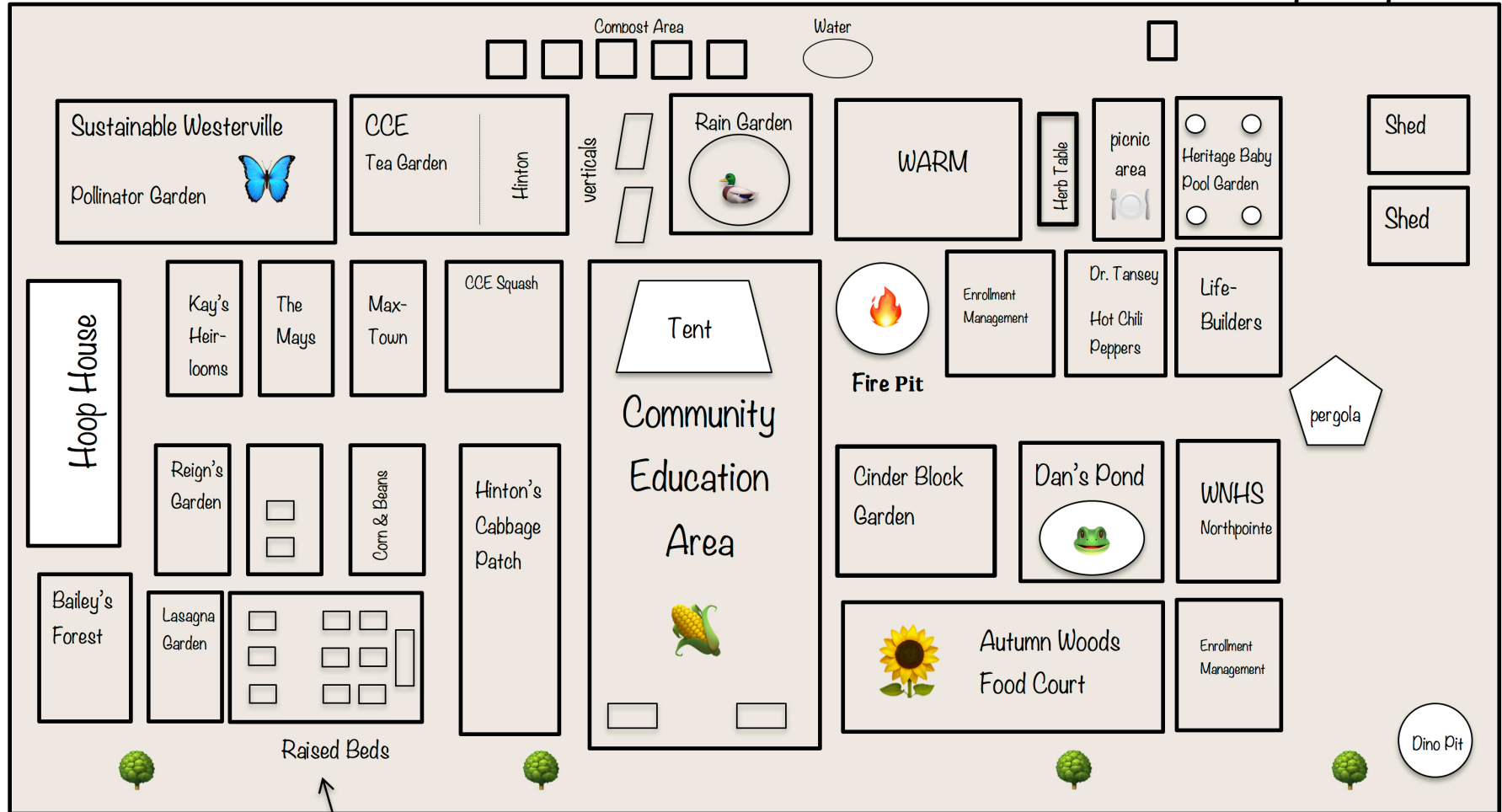
Est. 2010



Brownfield Restoration

The Wetlands

The Otterbein Community Garden



SPARK, ADRLs, Lifebuilders, Hinton, CCE,
Sustainable Westerville, Human Resources



Local ownership
of the land by
marginalized
groups





Sustaining natural fauna and flora



Growing food desired by food-insecure residents



Growing food free of toxins (soil testing)



Maintaining the right to grow & donate food



Composting: naturally enriching the soil





Upcycling resources and sharing knowledge about innovative gardening practices



Place-Based Education

Providing an
interactive
landscape for
learning



SEEDS

Students Engaged in
Ecological
Development and
Stewardship





WE LOVE SEEDS

Access to knowledge about (the means) to produce
their own food



Next generation education with Library partnership



Next generation access to land



KINDNESS
MATTERS
AT OTTERBEIN



Learning to be civic stewards



THE PROMISE HOUSE

Est. 2016

37%

of First Year Pell
Eligible students:

EFC = 0

46%

of students surveyed said they
would use a **food pantry** if one
were available.



7%

of students surveyed did
not eat for a **whole day**
because there wasn't
enough money for food.
(N=49)

1047 Otterbein
undergraduates
students do not
have a meal plan
(48%)

Providing access to healthy food for students

What is the Promise House?

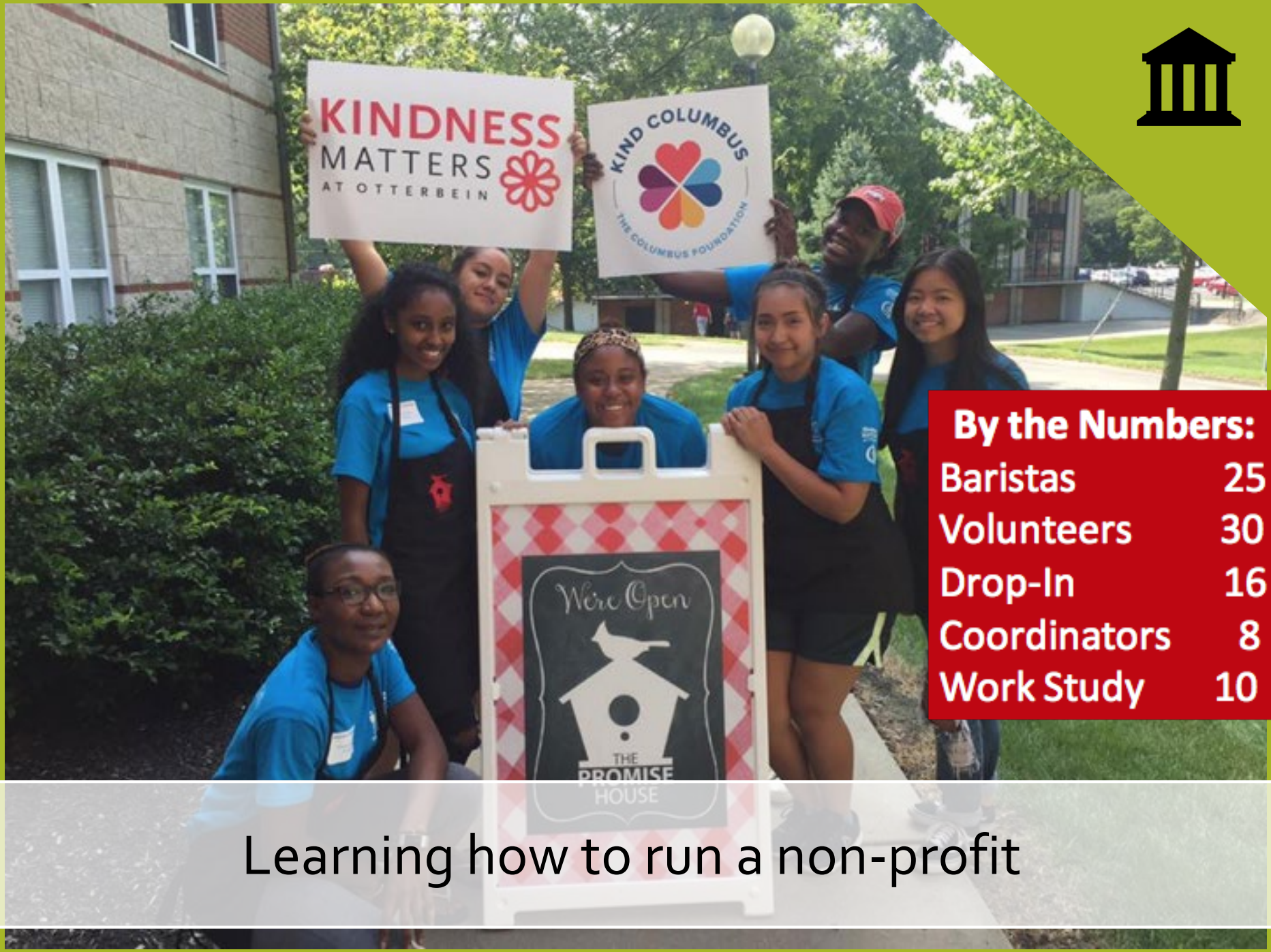
- Volunteer & Community Resource Center
- Student-Led Organization
- A Free Community Café and Pantry
- Simulated non-profit organization



Access to student-friendly food at a choice market



Place-Based Education at the Resource Center



By the Numbers:	
Baristas	25
Volunteers	30
Drop-In	16
Coordinators	8
Work Study	10

Learning how to run a non-profit

THE **PROMISE** HOUSE



Promise House Bike

Making food
more accessible
across campus

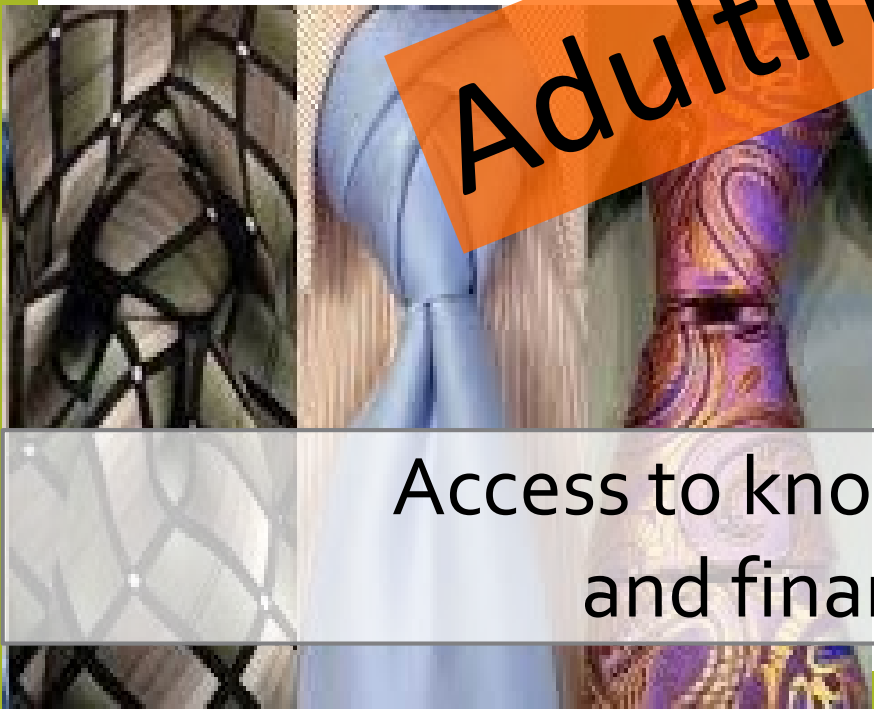


FOOD RECOVERY NETWORK

Food Recovery with Bon Appetit



Adulting 101



Access to knowledge about food
and financial wellness



SERVICE-LEARNING COURSES



Recipe

Title of Dish: Dorm "Baked" Sweet

Prep Time: 5
minutes

Cook Time: 10
minutes



Directions

1. Clean potatoes with water (brushing if necessary)
Pierce the sweet potato skin 5-6 times.
2. Place on a microwaveable plate and microwave for 5-8 minutes, rotating halfway through
3. You are done microwaving your sweet potatoes when a fork spears into them easily. If they are too firm, continue to cook your sweet potatoes in the microwave in one-minute increments.

Ingredients

- 1 sweet potato
- vegan butter
- black pepper
- salt



Watch the video on YouTube.com

Health and Nursing Courses:

Knowledge about preventative food choices

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BP5QgDjFUqU>



Engineering

Designing
accessible
garden
tools: ethics
of universal
design



Environmental Sciences

Well-Monitoring at the garden to track agricultural run-off into wetlands and other pollutants





Engineering: Year-round access to food production



Sociology, English, Education
Teach-in for the Planet: Reducing Carbon Footprints



Sociology: Maintaining the right to barter for food



Earth Festival: Advocacy, Intersectionality, Activism



Interdependence Principle

Water
Food
Energy
Soil
Animals





KEY RESOURCES

Chilton, Mariana and Donald Rose. July 2009. "A Rights-Based Approach to Food Insecurity in the United States." *Am J Public Health* 99(7): 1203-1211.

Gilbert, Melissa Kesler. (October 27, 2015) "Minding Our Peas and Cucumbers: Cultivating Learning Landscapes in the Fight for Food Justice." (Published by NASPA, Lead Initiative.) <https://www.naspa.org/constituent-groups/posts/minding-our-peas-and-cucumbers-cultivating-learning-landscapes-in-the-fight>

Gilbert, Melissa Kesler. Fall 2013. "Cultivating Civic Ecotones for Community Partnerships." *AAC&U Diversity and Democracy*.
<https://www.aacu.org/diversitydemocracy/2013/fall/gilbert>

Gray, Leslie, Johnson, Joanna, Latham, Nicole, Tang, Michelle, and Ann Thomas. 2012. "Critical Reflections on Experiential Learning for Food Justice." *Journal of Agriculture, Food Systems, and Community Development* 2(3): 137-147.

Johnson, Betsy. 2014. Introduction. Community Greening Review. *American Community Gardening Association*. V19. Accessed online, <https://communitygarden.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Greening-Review-2014.pdf>: 3-4.